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## Zoar in the Civil War

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The controversies surrounding the Missouri-Kansas boundary call out for scholarly attention, and many other lines deserve similar research. *The Border between Them* offers a useful structure to understand countless regions divided by a political barrier throughout the United States. State and regional historians would benefit by applying some of Neely's tactics to their own communities, observing the consequences of imposed divisions on an otherwise homogenous geography. By incorporating the most famous years along the Missouri-Kansas line into a broader historical context, Neely's *The Border between Them* tells a much-needed comprehensive story about a particularly contested region, and by extension demonstrates the long-lasting complications of political boundaries in the United States.

*Zoar in the Civil War*, by Philip E. Webber. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2007. vi, 130 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$18.95 paper.

Reviewer Kristen Anderson is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Iowa. Her research and writing focus on German Americans and African Americans in nineteenth-century St. Louis.

In *Zoar in the Civil War*, Philip Webber examines the German Pietist communal society of Zoar Village, Ohio, during the Civil War. For their longevity and their beliefs, the Zoar Separatists are often compared with another German communal society, the Amana Inspirationists, who eventually settled in Iowa. Because one of their major principles was nonviolence, the war posed a dilemma for this group. Their hatred of slavery led many members of the community to sympathize with the Union cause. The community expressed more uncertainty about actual military service by its members, however. A few young men volunteered for service in the Union Army, while others in the community sought to avoid a draft by agreeing to pay penalties. Webber argues that the Civil War was one of the Americanizing factors that ultimately led to the dissolution of the society in 1898.

Webber examines the experiences of both those who went to war and those who stayed home through a detailed investigation of the documents and photographs in the Zoar Collections at the Ohio Historical Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society. He translates significant portions of these documents, providing a useful resource for non-German speakers. By determining that the Civil War was a central experience in the lives of the Zoar Germans, both because of and in spite of their dedication to nonviolence, Webber contributes to a better understanding of Germans in the Civil War and to a better understanding of the war in the Midwest.